

*Full Length Research Paper*

## Foreign language anxiety of students studying English Language and Literature: A Sample from Turkey

Şenel Elaldi

Cumhuriyet University, Sivas, Turkey.

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A considerable number of foreign language learners experience a feeling of anxiety in language learning process. The purpose of this research was to find out foreign language anxiety levels of students studying in the Faculty of English Language and Literature at Cumhuriyet University, Sivas, Turkey when they were in preparatory class and when they were in fourth grade. Furthermore, it was aimed to examine whether gender factor was effective on foreign language anxiety of students. The research was carried out on 98 students (57 female) continuing from preparatory class to fourth grade and taking part in the first and second phases of the study voluntarily. Research data were collected through Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale. Although foreign language anxiety levels of the students were found at moderate level both in preparatory class and in fourth grade, students had slightly higher anxiety level in fourth grade than they had in preparatory class. However, foreign language anxiety among males was found higher than females.

**Key words:** Language learning, anxiety, students studying English Language and Literature.

### INTRODUCTION

Anxiety has been a matter of considerable interest in language education setting for educators since it is a major obstacle to foreign language learning that the learners need to overcome (Wu, 2010; Zheng, 2008). Horwitz (2001) asserts that one-third of all foreign language learners experience some level of language anxiety. Therefore, foreign language anxiety has been a topic of much interest and research in recent years (Ellis, 2008), especially the 1980s witnessed the breakthrough in the studies on foreign language learning anxiety (Wang, 2014).

Foreign language anxiety is an important factor that

influences one's level of achievement in foreign language learning (Dordinejad and Ahmadabad, 2014). According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), foreign language anxiety - "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning"- is different from a general feeling of anxiety, and therefore, keeps learners from reaching their goals (Horwitz, 2001), and prevents foreign language learners from successful performance in the target language (Hashemi and Abbasi, 2013). Horwitz et al. (1986) defined foreign language anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-

E-mail: [snlelaldi@gmail.com](mailto:snlelaldi@gmail.com).

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perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process". From this perspective, they claim that language anxiety is unique due to the way it involves learners' self-concepts to communicate competently and to present themselves genuinely.

Foreign language anxiety can occur if students are exposed to several negative experiences in a foreign language context (Chen and Chang, 2004; Sparks et al., 2000; Hewitt and Stephenson, 2012; Horwitz et al., 1986; Horwitz et al., 2010; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991; MacIntyre, 1999; Saadi, 2009; Sparks and Ganschow, 2007). Moreover, it can "make learners get discouraged, lose faith in their abilities, escape from participating in classroom activities, and even give up the effort to learn a language well" (Na, 2007). Given that learners with high anxiety often perform at lower levels than those with lower anxiety (Cui, 2011).

Horwitz et al. (1986) classified foreign language anxiety into three components as:

1. Communication apprehension, which arises from learners' inability to adequately express mature thoughts and ideas.
2. Fear of negative social evaluation, which arises from a learner's need to make a positive social impression on others.
3. Test anxiety, an apprehension about academic evaluation.

In communication apprehension, foreign language learners have difficulty not only in speaking but also comprehending messages from others (Horwitz et al., 1986). In other words, learners have difficulty in understanding others or in being understood. Fear of negative evaluation is closely related to communication apprehension (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Additionally, especially "students whose personalities tend to fear negative evaluation seem to be strong candidates for experiencing anxiety in foreign language classrooms" (Kitano, 2001). Huang (2005) reported that, the causes of provoking test anxiety might be derived from the educational system. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) found that communication apprehension and fear of social evaluation were the main factors in foreign language anxiety, while test anxiety was just a general problem, and it was independent from the foreign language anxiety.

Language learning anxiety may be experienced due to linguistic difficulties foreign language learners face in learning and using the target language (Hashemi and Abbasi, 2013). However, Horwitz (2001) claimed that foreign language anxiety is independent of first language learning disabilities and should be viewed as an

important factor that hinders language learning in and of itself. Zhang and Zhong (2012) has categorized causes of foreign language learning anxiety as being "learner-induced, classroom-related, skill-specific, and some society-imposed depending on different contexts".

The main cause of anxiety stems from "learners' unrealistic or erroneous beliefs about language learning" (Zhang and Zhong, 2012). While some learners think they lack the aptitude or gift to learn a new language (Price, 1991), some believe that two years or less is sufficient for them to become proficient in another language (Horwitz, 1988) without estimating the difficulty of the language learning task, and therefore, they could possibly experience conflict resulted in anxiety.

Learners may also have erroneous beliefs and expectations about language standards. Since foreign language learners are exposed to the expert language of native speakers from tapes, videos and instructors (Kitano, 2001), they "set their standards as high as the level of native speakers", which causes anxiety because of failing to achieve the high standards (Zhang and Zhong, 2012). In addition, high expectations that learners are required to communicate and speak in public cause anxiety. The fear of falling short of these expectations can hinder the learning process (Rajanthran et al., 2013). Anxious learners think that their language skills, especially speaking skills, are weaker than their peers' (Young, 1991) because of perceiving speaking ability as the most important. Additionally, Kitano (2001) states that "speaking skill is usually the first thing that learners compare with that of peers, teachers and native speakers".

Classroom-related anxiety is associated with instructors, peers and classroom practices (Zhang and Zhong, 2012). Instructors who believe their role is to correct students constantly, who feel that they cannot have students working in pairs because the class may get out of control may be contributing to learner language anxiety (Young, 1991).

According to Hashemi and Abbasi (2013), the more friendly and informal the language classroom environment, the less it is likely to be anxiety provoking. They state that "formal language classroom setting is a major source of stress and anxiety because of its demand to be more correct and clearer in using the target language". Furthermore, the evaluation or criticisms from peers is also a major cause of anxiety (Conway, 2007). Young (1991) found that anxious learners thought their skills in language were weaker than their peers' and they were looking down at them. In addition, anxious learners are scared because of a fear of appearing awkward, foolish and incompetent in the eyes of their peers (Jones, 2004).

Classroom activities have also caused anxiety. As it was reported in Price's (1991) interview study, many anxious students fear making mistakes in pronunciation

in front of their peers. Furthermore, oral presentation is the most anxiety-provoking classroom activity (Koch and Terrell, 1991), which makes the classroom environment more formal and stressful for the learners. However, Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) reported language learners to be less anxious and stressful in environments which emphasize collaborative activities among the teachers and the students.

Fear of testing is another source of anxiety stemming from classroom environment, where learners are constantly being evaluated. Students put down a wrong answer because of their nervousness during the test (Conway, 2007). According to Young (1991), "in language testing, the greater degree of student evaluation and the more unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the more the learner anxiety is produced". Since students with high levels of foreign language anxiety exhibit avoidance behavior (Gregersen and Horwitz, 2002), it is essential to find out the causes of foreign language anxiety and reduce the undesired effects in foreign language teaching to create a low anxiety classroom for the learners (Young, 1991).

Founded in 1990, the Department of English Language and Literature at Cumhuriyet University offers undergraduate (BA) and graduate (MA) degrees in English. To enroll for a BA at the department, students must take the two exams - Student Selection and Placement System Exam (OSYS) and Foreign Language Exam (YDS) - administered by Student Selection and Placement Center (OSYM) in Turkey. Within the Turkish education system, the only way to enter a university's foreign language department is through these exams. After the enrollment process, students must take the English proficiency exam run by the language school. If students fail to pass this exam they are required to spend a year in the English preparatory class of the language school before beginning their studies at the department. In the English preparatory class, students take intensive English courses - a minimum of 25 hours per week - to understand written and spoken English, to express themselves in English in writing and orally, and to effectively follow and understand the courses being provided in English. After having successfully completed their preparatory class within one year, the students take the English proficiency exam again before being allowed to continue their normal education in their department. In case students are not able to be successful in this exam, these students must retake the preparatory class. In BA degree of the Department of English Language, various lectures are given generally on the subjects of English Literature, English Language, Linguistics, Translation, Literary Theories and Practical Criticism.

This study aimed to find out foreign language anxiety levels of university students studying English Language and Literature when they were in preparatory class and when they were in fourth grade. Furthermore, it was

aimed to examine whether gender factor was effective on foreign language anxiety of students. Therefore, to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the individual anxiety level to each item of FLCAS responded by the students who are in preparatory class as new beginners and in fourth grade as candidates of graduation?
2. What is the overall anxiety level of the students based on the FLCAS instrument when they are in preparatory class and when they are in fourth grade?
3. Does foreign language anxiety of students in preparatory class and in fourth grade vary according to gender?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

A survey model, one of typical descriptive study designs, was employed in the present study. Descriptive research is used to describe a current situation that existed in the past or exists now in the way it is (Karasar, 2009). Survey method is frequently used to collect descriptive data to find out "what is" (Borg and Gall, 1989).

### Sample

Preparatory students ( $N = 124$ ) studying in the Faculty of English Language and Literature at Cumhuriyet University in Turkey volunteered for this study. The study was carried out on the entire group of students rather than making a sample selection. Therefore, the first phase of the study was completed with 118 of these students enrolled in fall 2011.

Afterward, in the spring term of 2015 when the same students attended fourth grade, the second phase of the research included only 98 participants (57 female) - continuing from preparatory class to fourth grade and taking part in the first phase of the study. Therefore, the results of the current study were evaluated for 98 participants. The sample and the population of this study is of great significance for English language teaching because the study is dealing with English Language and Literature graduates and their language learning experiences, perceptions throughout their language development. This is a very special group since they are expected to be highly proficient and fluent in second language (L2). So the study assumes that they should be -somehow- quite concerned about learning and using L2.

### Instrumentation

Data for the study were collected using the *-Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale-* (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). The scale is a self-report measure of language learner's feelings of anxiety as a specific reaction to foreign language learning in the foreign language classroom (Wang, 2010). The instrument is intended to measure foreign language learners' anxiety level while learning a language in the classroom. The FLCAS uses a 5-point Likert scale with 33 items, ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Total anxiety scores for the scale range from 33 to 165 points. While the answer *-strongly*

agree- indicates high level of anxiety, -strongly disagree- indicates low level of anxiety that students feel (Horwitz, 2008). According to Horwitz et al. (1986), the internal consistency is 0.93 based on Cronbach's coefficient alpha and test-retest reliability over a period of eight weeks is  $r=0.83$  ( $p<.001$ ). This is a valid and reliable scale that has been consistently used in previous studies to measure anxiety (Aida, 1994; Elkhaphiefi, 2005; Horwitz et al., 1986; Kim, 2000; Kitano, 2001; Moghaddam, 2014; Price, 1991; Sus, 2002; Şener, 2015; Wang, 2010; Zhao, 2007).

### Data analysis

Statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) 18.0 package program was conducted in the analysis of data. Data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t-tests.

## RESULTS

First, reliability coefficients were computed. The modified FLCAS, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, showed an internal consistency of 0.91 for sample of this study. Turning to the first and second research questions regarding what the individual anxiety level to each item of FLCAS and the overall anxiety level of the students when they were new beginners in preparatory class and senior students in fourth grade, the individual and overall anxiety scores for each item are presented in Table 1.

In Table 1, all numbers indicate students who chose each answer from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). The mean FLCAS score of preparatory participants in this study was found to be 3.10 which indicated that the participants reported a moderate or slight level of anxiety. However, when the participants were surveyed when they were in fourth grade, their average FLCAS score was found to be 3.14. Although an increase of 0.04 points was found in their FLCAS levels, participants still had moderate level of anxiety. As shown in Table 1, in preparatory class, although 21 items exceeded 3.0, six of them went over 3.5. In fourth grade, no items were observed exceeding 3.5 and therefore, slight level of anxiety was displayed in all sub-dimensions. The mean of all the participants' scores of FLCAS when they were in preparatory class and in 4th grade is presented in Table 2. The data showed that the FLCAS scores of the participants when they were in preparatory class ranged from 41 to 165, with a mean of 102.22 ( $SD = 22.04$ ), in fourth grade, their scores changed from 52 to 162 with a mean of 103.59 ( $SD = 23.02$ ).

Turning to the third research question regarding the relationship between gender and foreign language anxiety, the data are presented in Table 3. To test for homogeneity of the two groups, a Levene's test for equality of variance was conducted. While the findings of the participants when they were in preparatory class supported the homogeneity assumption, in fourth grade,

except for the dimension -Fear of Negative Evaluation-, in overall scale and the other two dimensions, the level of homogeneity was found below 0.05, which was selected as the level of significance. Therefore, in order to examine the relationship between gender and foreign language anxiety, the Mann Whitney U test was utilized in fourth grade data while independent t-test was performed in preparatory class data of the same participants.

The findings represented in Table 3 revealed that male participants' anxiety scores obtained from not only overall scale but also all the dimensions of FLCAS were found statistically significant both in preparatory class and in fourth grade when compared with female participants.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to examine foreign language anxiety levels of students studying English Language and Literature at Cumhuriyet University, Turkey when they were in preparatory class and when they were in fourth grade. Furthermore, gender variable was also taken into account. The results indicated that students had average anxiety levels both in preparatory class ( $Mean=3.10$ ;  $SD=1.34$ ) and in fourth grade ( $Mean=3.14$ ;  $SD=1.37$ ). As Horwitz (2008) explained, "students with averages around 3 should be considered slightly anxious, while students with averages below 3 are probably not very anxious. Students who average 4 and above, are probably fairly anxious".

Therefore, the findings of the study revealed that language anxiety did not necessarily decline in line with students' foreign language progress from preparatory class to fourth grade. On the contrary, when the students included in the study came to fourth grade, their anxiety level was found slightly higher than their preparatory class anxiety level. According to Casado and Dereshiwyky (2001) who examined university students' language learning and language anxiety and found a level of higher degree in their subjects' communication apprehension mean score in the second semester than in the first semester, anxiety does not diminish nor decrease with the experience acquired in academic year of language learning.

Similarly, Aydemir (2011) studied foreign language anxiety levels of university students at the beginning and at the end of the academic year, and found that the participants' foreign language anxiety levels increased at the end of the academic year. In addition, Ewald (2007), Kitano (2001) and Saito and Samimy (1996) suggested that advanced students experienced higher anxiety than elementary-or intermediate level students. Contrarily, some studies have concluded that foreign language anxiety is expected to decrease when experience and proficiency increases (Chapelle and Roberts, 1986;

**Table1.** FLCAS items with numbers of students selecting each alternative in preparatory and in fourth grade.

S/N	Variable	*SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Standard deviation
I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class								
1.	Prep. class	5	22	20	29	22	2.58	1.21
	4th grade	15	22	10	27	24	2.77	1.43
I don't worry about making mistakes in language class*								
2.	Prep. class	9	16	18	40	15	2.63	1.19
	4th grade	23	17	17	30	11	3.11	1.37
I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class								
3.	Prep. class	19	24	11	28	16	3.02	1.41
	4th grade	24	22	15	24	13	3.20	1.40
It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language								
4.	Prep. class	12	29	13	30	14	2.95	1.30
	4th grade	17	33	19	17	12	3.27	1.28
It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes*								
5.	Prep. class	34	34	17	5	8	3.83	1.20
	4th grade	17	22	20	31	8	3.09	1.25
During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course								
6.	Prep. class	19	38	22	14	5	3.53	1.11
	4th grade	14	32	16	31	5	3.19	1.18
I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am								
7.	Prep. class	24	27	20	15	12	3.37	1.33
	4th grade	28	27	9	21	13	3.37	1.43
I am usually at ease during tests in my language class*.								
8.	Prep. class	16	23	29	17	13	3.12	1.26
	4th grade	24	24	14	21	15	3.21	1.42
I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class								
9.	Prep. class	9	20	8	32	29	2.47	1.35
	4th grade	16	21	13	25	23	2.82	1.43
I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class								
10.	Prep. class	7	12	11	40	28	2.29	1.21
	4th grade	10	22	14	28	24	2.65	1.34
I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes*								
11.	Prep. class	23	24	16	19	16	3.19	1.42
	4th grade	26	20	13	25	14	3.19	1.44
In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know								
12.	Prep. class	10	21	15	33	19	2.69	1.29
	4th grade	21	23	9	31	14	3.06	1.41
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class								
13.	Prep. class	26	28	10	23	11	3.36	1.39
	4th grade	27	24	10	20	17	3.24	1.49
I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers*								
14.	Prep. class	37	27	16	12	6	3.79	1.25
	4th grade	28	22	19	12	17	3.33	1.45

**Table 1.** Cont'd

	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting						
15.	Prep. class	10	17	14	39	18	2.61
	4th grade	17	13	17	35	16	2.80
	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it						
16.	Prep. class	18	22	15	33	10	3.05
	4th grade	20	20	16	32	10	3.08
	I often feel like not going to my language class						
17.	Prep. class	31	32	15	10	10	3.65
	4th grade	27	28	12	19	12	3.40
	I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class*.						
18.	Prep. class	12	26	32	20	8	3.14
	4th grade	19	24	22	21	12	3.17
	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make						
19.	Prep. class	17	40	19	12	10	3.43
	4th grade	23	28	22	16	9	3.41
	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class						
20.	Prep. class	9	27	17	25	20	2.80
	4th grade	19	24	11	26	18	3.00
	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get						
21.	Prep. class	13	25	16	26	18	2.89
	4th grade	19	23	16	26	14	3.07
	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class*						
22.	Prep. class	16	25	18	28	11	3.07
	4th grade	21	21	20	23	13	3.14
	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do						
23.	Prep. class	17	33	16	17	15	3.20
	4th grade	29	20	15	20	14	3.31
	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students						
24.	Prep. class	19	24	14	24	17	3.04
	4th grade	24	24	11	28	11	3.22
	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind						
25.	Prep. class	13	31	22	22	10	3.15
	4th grade	12	35	19	28	4	3.23
	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes						
26.	Prep. class	28	43	10	10	7	3.77
	4th grade	18	29	6	40	5	3.15
	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class						
27.	Prep. class	16	18	18	26	20	2.84
	4th grade	12	16	14	38	18	2.65
	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed*.						
28.	Prep. class	13	33	16	23	13	3.10
	4th grade	28	20	20	23	7	3.40
	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says						
29.	Prep. class	9	26	14	36	13	2.82
	4th grade	16	22	18	32	10	3.02

**Table 1.** Cont'd

	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language						
30.	Prep. class	23	25	16	24	10	3.28
	4th grade	24	32	16	15	11	3.44
	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language						
31.	Prep. class	29	30	13	21	5	3.58
	4th grade	28	25	14	21	10	3.41
	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language*						
32.	Prep. class	32	21	18	14	13	3.46
	4th grade	24	20	14	24	16	3.12
	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance						
	Prep. class	9	20	8	38	23	2.53
	4th grade	17	26	13	29	13	3.05
33.	<b>Average(Prep)</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>3.10</b>	<b>1.34</b>
	<b>Average</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>3.14</b>	<b>1.37</b>
	(4th grade)						

\*SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neither agree nor disagree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.  
Reverse scored items are indicated by an asterisk (\*).

**Table 2.** Minimum, maximum and mean scores in the FLCAS.

<b>Preparatory class</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Overall FLCAS	98	41	165	102.22	22.04
Communication apprehension	-	13	55	32.97	8.78
Test anxiety	-	19	75	47.15	9.73
Fear of negative evaluation	-	8	35	22.10	5.76
<b>Fourth grade</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Overall FLCAS	-	52	162	103.59	23.02
Communication apprehension	-	15	55	33.60	9.07
Test anxiety	-	22	72	47.09	9.47
Fear of negative evaluation	-	10	35	22.90	6.13

Desrochers and Gardner 1981; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Gardner et al., 1977; Gardner et al., 1979; Gardner et al., 1997; Hismanoglu, 2013; Liu, 2006; Samimy, 1994).

For the gender differences in foreign language anxiety levels, the analyses indicated that foreign language anxiety among male participants was higher than among their female counterparts. More specifically, it was higher in terms of communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation and the overall FLCAS score both in preparatory class and in 4th grade. The reasons for this result could be that male students are more inclined to feel anxious in the language classroom and are worried about making mistakes (Awan et al., 2010). The findings of the present study support the results of other studies which asserted that male learners

experienced higher foreign language anxiety than female learners (Awan et al., 2010; Aydemir, 2011; Campbell, 1999; Cui, 2011; Hsu, 2009; Karabey, 2011; Kitano, 2001; MacIntyre, Baker and Donovan, 2002; Na, 2007; Sertçetin, 2011; Sevim and Gedik, 2014; Wang, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

This study has concluded that over a four and a half year period, students studying English Language and Literature at Cumhuriyet University, city of Sivas, Turkey experienced moderate level of anxiety. It was observed that language anxiety levels of the students did not decrease during this time interval. On the contrary, a

**Table 3.** Independent t test and Mann Whitney U test results of gender and foreign language anxiety.

<b>Preparatory class</b>									
<b>FLCAS</b>	<b>N 98</b>	<b>Female (n= 57; 58.2 %)</b>		<b>Male (n= 41; 41.8 %)</b>		<b>T &amp; P Values</b>		<b>Levene's test</b>	
		<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
Overall scale	-	96.75	22.80	109.83	18.68	-3.01	0.003*	0.474	0.49
Communication apprehension	-	30.37	9.13	36.59	6.86	-3.67	0.000*	1.859	0.17
Test anxiety	-	45.35	10.28	49.66	8.39	-2.20	0.030*	.202	0.65
Fear of negative evaluation	-	21.04	5.77	23.59	5.47	-2.20	0.030*	0.102	0.75
<b>Fourth grade</b>									
<b>FLCAS</b>	<b>N 98</b>	<b>Female (n= 57; 58.2 %)</b>		<b>Male (n= 41; 41.8 %)</b>		<b>T &amp; P Values</b>		<b>Levene's Test</b>	
		<b>M</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
Fear of negative evaluation	-	21.93	5.92	24.24	6.24	-1.86	.065	0.393	0.53
<b>Mann Whitney U</b>									
<b>Overall scale</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean rank</b>	<b>Sum of ranks</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>P</b>	
Female		57	44.12	2515.00		862.000	-2.20	0. 027*	
Male		41	56.98	2336.00		-	-	-	
				Levene's test		<i>F=5.205</i>	<i>P&lt;0.05</i>		
<b>Communication apprehension</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean rank</b>	<b>Sum of ranks</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>P</b>	
Female		57	42.87	2443.50		790.500	-2.72	.006*	
Male		41	58.72	2407.50		-	-	-	
				Levene's test		<i>F=4.540</i>	<i>P&lt;0.05</i>		
<b>Test anxiety</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean rank</b>	<b>Sum of ranks</b>		<b>U</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>P</b>	
Female		57	46.27	2637.50		984.500	-1.32	0.185	
Male		41	53.99	2213.50		-	-	-	
				Levene's test		<i>F=8.796</i>	<i>P&lt;0.05</i>		

slight level of increase was found, particularly in terms of both overall FLCAS and dimensions of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. As for the dimension of test anxiety, a slight decrease was observed in the fourth grade.

Therefore, it can be reported that no changes seem to occur between a foreign language learning and anxiety depending on long-term effects. It appears to be related to some factors leading to anxiety in foreign language learning. High expectations from students studying English Language and Literature come first among the factors that may not only be ineffective but extremely discouraging as well although foreign language students' positive expectations for their own performance are important predictors of their future success (Daley et al., 1999). Because they are going to be professionals who will be expected to use the target language properly, efficiently and fluently.

Şener (2015) claims that high level of anxiety is a general problem of Turkish English language learners

who cannot speak in front of others although they know English grammar well due to their being less motivated, not having enough self-confidence or practice to speak in English. Additionally, some other factors like lack of effort, lack of motivation, poor language learning habits and low ability in language learning (Schwarz, 1997) seem to be the reason for anxiety and failure. It should be noted that a teacher plays an important role in student learning choices, experiences and in making learning meaningful to students (Wright et al., 1997). It is teachers' duties that should detect the cause of foreign language anxiety and try to help their students, or create the affective classroom environment so that their learners would learn to communicate rather than fear the language (Chaokongjakra, 2013).

However, the results in this study may not be sufficient to provide in-depth insights into students' foreign anxiety levels. To this end, further both qualitative and quantitative studies with large samples using participants who study EFL departments of different universities may

be conducted concurrently. A set of meta-analytic studies on the sources of foreign language anxiety in Turkish students may be conducted. As Şener (2015) claims developing the speaking and listening skills of foreign language learners are always neglected in Turkey. For this reason, many universities and private high schools hire foreign native speakers of English in their English departments to overcome students' communication difficulties and anxiety problems (Şenel, 2012).

Therefore, the main purpose of the EFL teaching in Turkey should be based on the development of the four skills rather than instilling strict grammar rules on students. In this vein, interviewing students about their sources of concerns is recommended in order to reveal whether it is related to their professional expectations or not. Looking into the relation between language proficiency of the graduates and their anxiety levels may also be recommended whether students who gained more skills in L2 are still anxious, or whether they are more or less anxious compared to other students.

## Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflicts of interest.

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